

THE CHARGER

February 2010

466th Meeting

Vol. 31, #6

Tonight's Program:

The 26th Ohio Voluntary Infantry: The Groundhog Regiment

The Twenty-sixth Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry was officially organized at Camp Chase (Columbus) from June 8-24, 1861 to serve for three years. As such, the regiment was one of the first to answer President Abraham Lincoln's call to defend the Union.

Throughout the War, nearly 1200 men were part of the 26th at one time or another, most as direct enlistment volunteers, but others as transfers from other regiments (most commonly the 97th OVI). During the war, 122 were killed or mortally wounded, 13 died as prisoners of war (most of them at Andersonville), 85 died from disease, 245 were disabled from combat, 112 were discharged (probably due to serious illness or injury), 48 transferred out to other regiments, 441 were mustered out at the end of their term, one deserted, and records are incomplete for 149 soldiers.

The regiment fought in many well known major Western Theater campaigns including: Stones River, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Resaca, New Hope Church, Kennesaw Mountain, Dallas, Peach Tree Creek, Atlanta, Jonesboro, Lovejoy's Station, Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville. The regiment also fought in dozens of lesser known battles or skirmishes. The regiment also is noted for routing famous Confederate General Forrest's cavalry on several occasions.

Taken from www.26thohioinfantry.com

Tonight's Speaker:

Jeff Hill

Jeff Hill is the webmaster of the 26th OVI website. He is the descendant of two members of the regiment and is writing a history of the regiment. The regiment fought at Stones River, Chickamauga, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville.



Date: **Wednesday,
February 10, 2010**

Place: **Judson Manor
1890 E. 107th Street
Cleveland, Ohio**

Time: **Drinks 6 PM
Dinner 6:45 PM**

Reservations: **Please Call
Dan Zeiser (440) 449-9311
Or email ccwrt1956@yahoo.com
By 9 pm Sunday before meeting**

Meal choice: **Caesar salad, roasted
chicken breast with pesto, garlic
mashed potato and vegetable.**

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FOUNDED 1957

President: **Dennis Keating** (216) 397-0188
Vice President: **Lisa Kempfer** (440) 526-1318
Secretary: **Marge Wilson** (216) 932-6558
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Editor - THE CHARGER - Dan Zeiser

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 2010

Greetings,

During the Civil War, Ohio raised 198 voluntary infantry regiments. This month we will hear about the 26th OVI from Jeff Hill, whose ancestors served with this "Groundhog" regiment (as did Jon Thompson's ancestors). We will hear about its service in some of fiercest and most memorable battles in the West, including Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Sherman's Atlanta campaign, and Nashville. Jeff has written a book about this regiment's history, which will be published later this year. He has created a website on the 26th OVI: <http://geocities.com/ovi26th/index.html>.

Several of you, like me, read in the Plain Dealer (January 14) that the new Cleveland Browns President Mike Holmgren, a former high school history teacher, is a Civil War buff. I immediately contacted him and invited him to join us. He thanked us, but indicated that for the immediate future his duties precluded him from participating. Perhaps we will see him at some future time.

The Plain Dealer reported (January 29) that two men have been indicted for vandalism for decapitating the statue of James Garfield at Hiram College. Happily, his head has been restored (with an imbedded location device). Hopefully, the full Garfield statue will not be disturbed again. For those who visit Washington, D.C., I suggest that you make sure to pay a visit to the Garfield memorial statue near Capitol Hill (one of the many Civil War generals memorialized in sculptures in the nation's capital). I also recommend the "Do You Know Your Lincoln?" exhibit continuing this year at the Western Reserve Historical Society.

Respectfully,
Dennis Keating

**CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE
2009/2010 SCHEDULE**

September 9, 2009

**Plenty of Blame to
Go Around: Jeb Stu-
art's Controversial
Ride to Gettysburg**



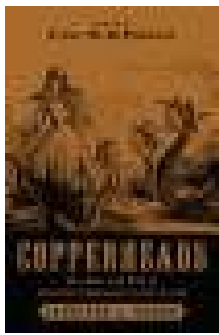
Eric Wittenberg

October 14, 2009

Behind the Scenes at a Civil War Movie

**Michael Kraus
Curator of the Pittsburgh Soldiers &
Sailors Military Museum & Memorial
Advisor on Cold Mountain and
Gettysburg movies**

November 11, 2009



**The Copperheads:
Lincoln's Oppo-
nents in the North**

**Prof. Jennifer L.
Weber**

December 9, 2009

Three Soldiers and the Negro

**David L. Forte
Professor
Cleveland-Marshall College of
Law**

January 13 2010

**The Dick Crews Annual
Debate**

*After Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E.
Lee, William Tecumseh Sherman Was
the Greatest General of the War*

Moderator: William F. B. Vodrey

February 10, 2010

**The 26th Ohio
Volunteer Infantry:
The Ground Hog
Regiment**
Jeff Hill



March 10, 2010

**Steps Toward War: Two Dramatic
Rescues That Led To It.**
Nat Brandt

April 14, 2010

**Rutherford B. Hayes
and the
23rd Ohio Volunteer
Infantry**
Thomas J. Culbertson



May 12, 2010



**John Wilkes
Booth:
Escape and
Capture**
Mel Maurer

**For membership in the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, please visit our web site:
<http://clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com>**

LOVEJOY OF ILLINOIS

By John C. Fazio, © 2009

Part 1 of 2

In a very real sense, the Civil War's first casualty fell not at Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861 (Pvt. David Hough, killed during a post-bombardment salute to Old Glory), or even in Alexandria, Virginia, on May 24, 1861 (Ephraim Elmer Ellsworth, killed after tearing down a Confederate flag atop the Marshall House Inn), but in Alton, Illinois, on November 7, 1837. For there and then it was that the first volley from a pro-slavery mob ended the life of Elijah Parish Lovejoy, a courageous idealist who paid with his life for his defense of free speech and a free press and his opposition to slavery. In so doing, he added his name to a very, very long list of men and women for whom principle was more important than convenience, so much so, in fact, that it was worth dying for. It would be left to another Illinoisian and the Northern coalition he led, twenty-seven and a half years later, to vindicate this Illinoisian's message.



Lovejoy was born on his grandfather's farm near Albion, Maine, on November 9, 1802. He was the first of nine children born to Daniel Lovejoy and Elizabeth Pattee. His father was a minister (some sources say Presbyterian, some Congregational) and

farmer; his mother a devout Christian. Elijah was named for Daniel's close friend and mentor, the Reverend Elijah Parish. Not surprisingly, Elijah Lovejoy had a deeply religious upbringing and would follow his father in the ministry.

Lovejoy first attended public schools, then moved on to the Academy at Monmouth, in lake country not far from Lewiston, and China Academy, in China, Maine, a small community near the state's capital, Augusta. After becoming proficient in Latin and mathematics, he attended Waterville College (now Colby College) in Waterville, Maine, enrolling as a sophomore in 1823 and graduating in 1826 as valedictorian and class poet. (It is curious how so many idealists embrace poetry as a vehicle better suited than prose to express their deepest feelings.) While at Waterville, he taught in the college's preparatory division and then taught at China Academy after graduation.

It was during this period that he experienced the emotional difficulty common to so many young people as they struggle to reconcile their religious convictions and their basic sense of right and wrong with the reality of the world around them. It is a process of bridging the gap between childhood and adulthood, a process that some accomplish smartly, some reasonably well, some not very well, and some not at all. In any case, he overcame his thoughts of suicide, his loneliness, and his despondency sufficiently well to move on, though he found himself increasingly at odds with people who did not share his religious beliefs.

In May, 1827, following the advice of his teachers at Waterville, he moved to Boston, with Illinois as his ultimate destination. Unable to find work there to finance his journey, he set out on foot for the Prairie State, stopping first in New York City. There he found work with the *Saturday Evening Gazette* as a subscription peddler. Still struggling financially, and with Illinois seemingly a world away, he sought help from the Rev. Jeremiah Chapin, President of Waterville College, who promptly sent him the funds necessary for him to make the journey, which he did, arriving in Hillsboro, Montgomery County, in the fall of 1827.

Finding the sparsely settled land in south central Illinois unsuited to his purposes, he decided to move to nearby St. Louis, a metropolis by comparison. There, by 1830, he became the editor and part owner of an anti-Jacksonian newspaper, the *St. Louis Times*, and the headmaster of a co-educational private school founded by himself. Still not comfortable with his calling, he came under the influence of abolitionist David Nelson and the Christian revivalist movement he led and, after joining the First Presbyterian Church, decided to enter the ministry. He returned to the east, studied at the Princeton Theological Seminary and, after graduation, was ordained by the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia as a Presbyterian minister in April, 1833. Soon thereafter, he returned to St. Louis, was ordained by the Presbytery of that city in 1834 and was elected its Moderator in 1835. He began preaching at the Des Peres Presbyterian Church (the "Old Meeting House"), which he established.

On March 4, 1835, he married twenty-one year old Celia Ann French, a farmer's daughter from St. Charles, Missouri, whom he had met while preaching at one of the Presbyterian churches then scattered on the frontier. In a letter to his mother, Elizabeth, dated March 10, 1835, it seems he could not find enough adjectives to describe her. He said that she was "tall, well shaped, of a light, fair complexion, dark flaxen hair, large blue eyes, with features of a perfect Grecian contour. In short ...very beautiful...pious...intelligent, refined...of agreeable manners...sweet-tempered, obliging, kind-hearted, industrious, good-humored, and possessed alike of a sound judgment and correct taste (and)...she loves me..."

In *The Illinois* (1985), James Gray wrote:

Their life together was so short and so tragic that one longs to believe that rich rewards were crowded into its few years. Certainly Celia Ann Lovejoy was a woman of touching devotion. The time came when she must fight with her fists to defend her husband and her home. She did not hesitate to do it, and the picture of her trying to hold off a mob with no aid but her own resolution is one of the most pathetic in an almost unbearably moving story. (pp. 154, 155)

About this time, and at the urging of a group of St. Louis businessmen, he combined his training in theology and his natural religious bent with his experience in journalism and began editing a religious newspaper, the *St. Louis Observer*. Had he remained a simple preacher, content to air his message from the pulpit only, he might have lived to a ripe old age with his beautiful wife, but there was too much fire in his belly for that. The issue of slavery, which had bedeviled the republic since its founding, had by this time taken center stage and he could do no less than address it with all of the sense of righteousness that had been instilled in him first by his devoutly religious parents, then at Monmouth and China Academies, and finally at Princeton. In a letter to his brother, Joseph, he expressed his belief that a righteous God would "overrule" slavery "...for the good of black and white, and his own Glory." Because Missouri was a slave state, his message had a special urgency and touched some very sensitive nerves.

From the pulpit and, more importantly, in the *Observer*, he began to advocate the gradual abolition of slavery and argue forcefully for freedom of speech and of the press. It must be said, too, that in so doing, he criticized not only the Slave Power and the advocates of slavery, but also other religious organizations and movements whose adherents did not share his views. Before we judge him too harshly on this score, we must consider that in the 19th century, prior to the Civil War, religious and non-religious bodies, organizations, and movements took positions

on the central issue of the period. His hostility toward some of them, therefore, had less to do with their dogma than with the fact that they either supported slavery, did not oppose it to a degree that suited him, or were neutral on the issue. Not surprisingly, his broader criticism earned him the enmity not only of the states rights advocates of slavery, but also of members of the religions, organizations, and movements that felt the hot breath of his anger.

His editorials became especially strident after he witnessed the murder of Francis McIntosh, a free black man from Pittsburgh who was accused of murdering his former master. McIntosh was forcefully taken from the steamboat, *Flora*, tied to a tree and burned to death by a mob. The matter was brought before a grand jury for investigation. The proceedings were presided over by Judge Luke E. Lawless. Judge Lawless refused to charge the mob leaders with the crime, stating to the jury that an insane frenzy had gripped the mob and that because the jurors could not know the mob's mentality, no individual could be tried for the crime. In his summation to the jurors, the Judge even tried to fix blame for the tragedy on Lovejoy. He held up a copy of the *Observer* and said:

It seems to me impossible that while such language is used and published as that which I have cited from *The St. Louis Observer*, there can be any safety in a slave-holding state.

Lovejoy blasted Lawless in the *Observer*, thereby further alienating the already alienated pro-slavery lobby, including Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton, a very powerful figure in state and national politics and a slaveholder himself, as well as many ordinary Southerners who saw any threat to the peculiar institution as a threat to their economic interests. Shortly after his anti-Lawless editorials, a mob, probably largely the same mob that murdered McIntosh, and no doubt energized by Lawless's ruling, destroyed Lovejoy's printing press. Because he feared further violence against his presses, himself, and his family, and also because of a lack of support by the Presbyterian General Assembly, he moved across the Mississippi to Alton, twenty-five miles from St. Louis in the free state of Illinois.

"Free state" is almost a misnomer, because involuntary servitude is only one expression of racism. Laws restricting mobility and curtailing the rights of blacks existed in many "free states" too, including Illinois. Before Illinois entered the Union in 1818, the territorial government enacted a "Black Code" that permitted indentured servitude, effectively circumventing the prohibition of slavery. The Constitution of 1818 prohibited slavery generally, but permitted it in the salt mines and also permitted slave owners to retain their slaves. The General Assembly contrib-



uted to the oppression by enacting legislation that made it very difficult for free blacks to migrate to the state and that made life unpleasant for those who did so. A black person could be required to show proof of his status as a freed black. If he could not do so, he was subject to a \$50 fine (a prohibitive sum in those days) and to sale by the sheriff to the highest bidder. The General Assembly also adopted a resolution approving slavery in states where it existed and condemning abolition societies in Illinois. The status of blacks in the "free state" of Illinois in 1837, therefore, was precarious at best and only a notch above that which obtained in the neighboring "slave-state" of Missouri.

In Alton, Lovejoy continued his work in the ministry, becoming the Stated Clerk

of the Presbytery in 1837 and pastor of the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, which is still going. He also continued publishing his newspaper, now named the *Alton Observer*, and now advocating the immediate rather than the gradual abolition of slavery, together with a fierce defense of free speech and a free press. On July 6, 1837, he wrote, in an editorial: "The voices of three million slaves call upon you to come and unloose the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free." Somehow he found time, too, to help form and support an organization that was very unpopular among Illinoisans, namely the Illinois Auxiliary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, a group that was far ahead of its time. His support further angered those citizens who were already unkindly disposed towards him.

Destruction of his presses continued. In Alton, three of them were seized, broken, and thrown into the Mississippi by pro-slavery mobs. After each such episode, he promptly ordered another press, only to see it meet the same fate as the others. After the destruction of his fourth press (the third in Illinois), he wrote in the *Observer*:

We distinctly avow it to be our settled purpose, never, while life lasts, to yield to this new system of attempting to destroy, by means of mob violence, the right of conscience, the freedom of opinion, and of the press.

Not surprisingly, this conscientious and dedicated fellow, who every day put his life on the line for principle, had by this time become a nationally known figure. It became a contest between Lovejoy and his supporters, nationwide, and the mob, and it soon became apparent to the latter that mere destruction of his instruments was not going to stop this determined fellow and the people behind him.



The Lovejoy monument in Alton, Illinois

John Fazio is a former president of the Cleveland Roundtable and a frequent contributor to the *Charger*.



Photo of the Lovejoy house in Alton, Illinois. It was located at 4th and Broadway, not far from the present location of the Lovejoy monument.



26th OVI Regiment Reunion- The exact date and location of the photo is unknown. Most likely, however, it was taken during the regiment's annual reunion either 1885 at Chillicothe or 1887 at Ashley. Source of information: 1888 *Roster of Survivors* Booklet. Note the triangle sign in the center of the photo that reads: "26 OVVI." *The triangle represents the insignia of the 4th Corps.* Note the five regimental flags furred in salute position. Note the wives and children in the photo. There are 48 veterans in the photo. Source: Ohio Historical Society archives. Taken from the 26th OVI website.

February Events at the James A. Garfield National Historic Site

“American Icons:” Presidents and First Ladies Look-a-Like Contest at Mentor Mall, Saturday, February 13, 1 pm.

Sunday Program Series: The History Channel’s “The Presidents.” Sunday, February 14, 2 pm.

President’s Day Commemoration, A Fee-Free Day! Monday, February 14, 10 am - 4 pm.

The Men of the 54th Massachusetts: A Black History Month Commemoration, Saturday, February 27, 2 pm.

NEXT MONTH

**STEPS TOWARD WAR:
TWO DRAMATIC RESCUES THAT LED TO IT**

NAT BRANDT